

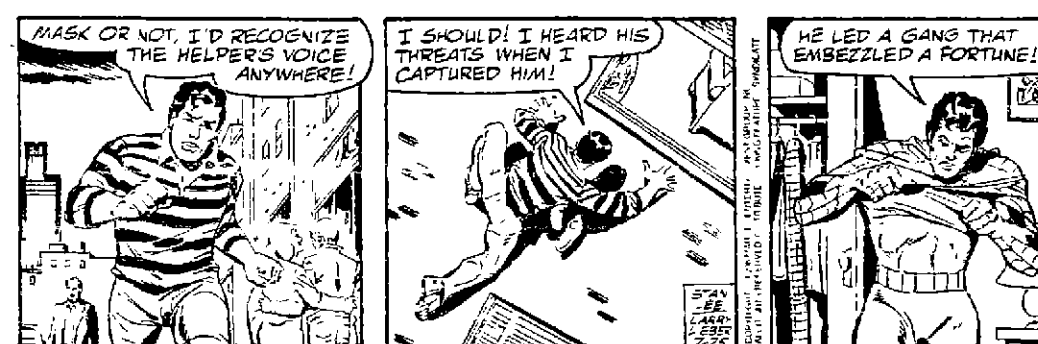
BLONDIE



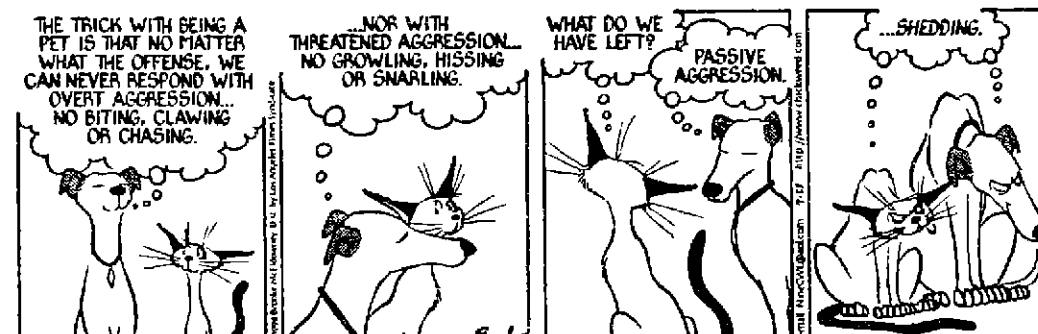
SALLY FORTH



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



9 CHICKWEED LANE



ANDY CAPP



ROSE IS ROSE



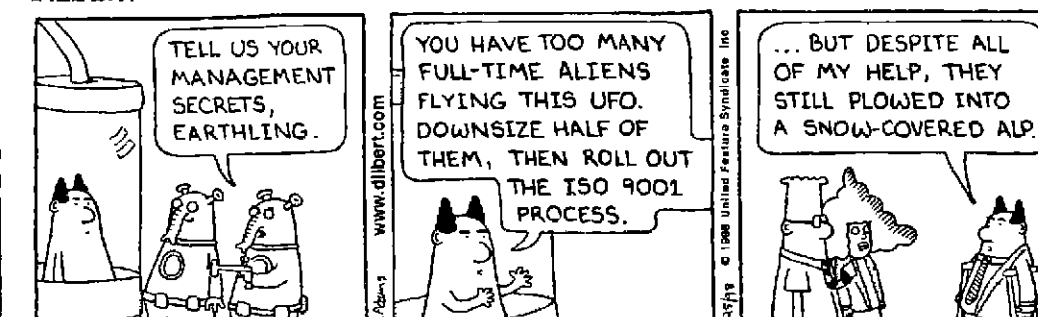
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM



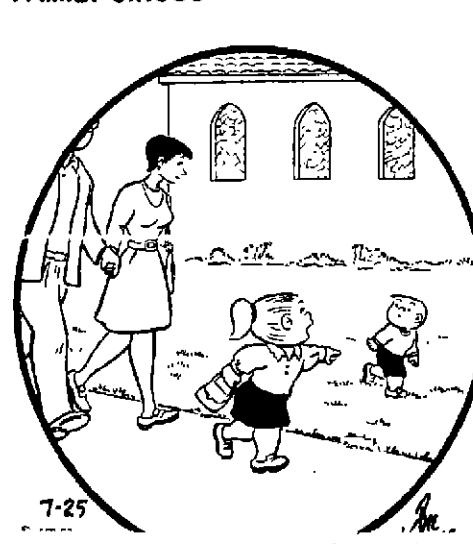
DILBERT



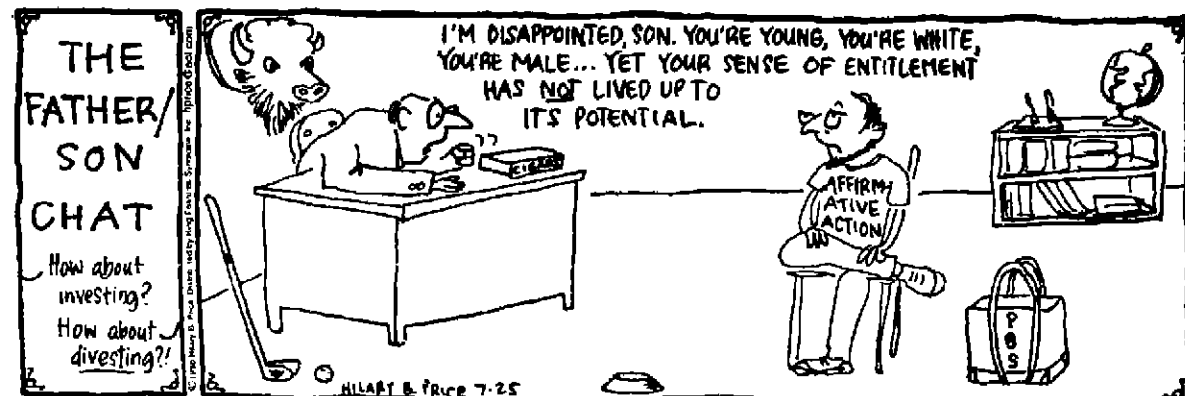
DENNIS THE MENACE



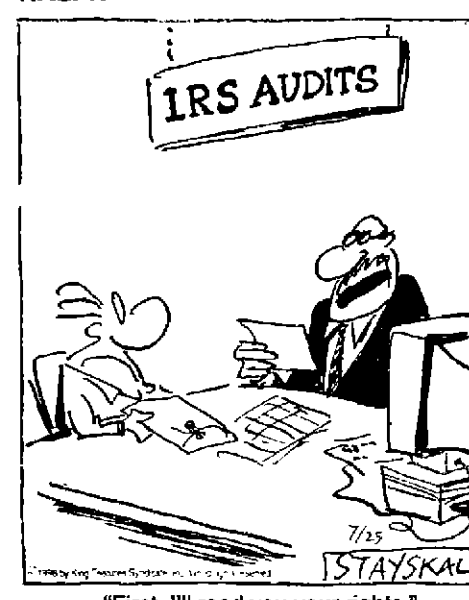
FAMILY CIRCUS



RHYMES WITH ORANGE



RALPH



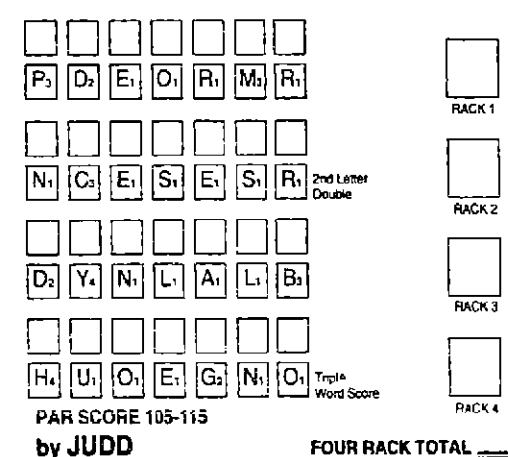
Today's Birthdays

Actress Estelle Getty is 75. Actress Barbara Harris is 63. Rock musician Verline White is 47. Model-actor Iman is 43. Cartoonist Ray Billingsley ("Curtis") is 41. Rock musician Thurston Moore (Sonic Youth) is 40. Actress Illeana Douglas is 33. Country singer Marly Brown is 33. Actor Matt LeBlanc ("Friends") is 31. Actor Brad Renfro is 16.

ON THIS DATE

For July 25:
In 1814, the bloodiest battle of the War of 1812 took place near Niagara Falls.
In 1850, gold was discovered in the Rouge River, California.
In 1865, Dr. Jane Barry died. She became the first female doctor in Britain, but only by disguising herself as a man, James Barry. Only on her death bed did she confirm she was a woman.
In 1866, Ulysses S. Grant was named General of the Army, the first officer to hold the rank.
In 1868, the Wyoming Territory was created out of portions of the Dakota, Idaho and Utah territories.
In 1871, William Schneider of Davenport, Iowa, invented the merry-go-round.
In 1956, 51 people died when the Italian liner Andrea Doria, sank after colliding with the Swedish ship, Stockholm, off the New England coast.
In 1978, Louise Brown, the world's first test tube baby, was born in England.

SCRABBLE



For solution, see Classified.

WORD SLEUTH

Verbs of sight



For solution, see Classified.

ACES ON BRIDGE

By Bobby Wolff

Do you aspire to gain a reputation for making devastating opening leads? Your prospects are minimal unless you take careful note of the opponents' bidding. Often it's not enough to lead an unbid suit. One must visualize the probable opposing distribution to gain insight into how best to develop crucial defensive winners. Test yourself against today's game. Examine the bidding only, and choose a lead with the West cards. The "safe" diamond 10 is not the winner for the defense. South wins in dummy, loses the trump finesse but brings in his game. With normal splits in both majors, he has an easy road to 10 winners. Looking at his own 14 HCP, West should realize he cannot expect East to contribute a high-card winner. Where else might West develop a trick for East? South's bidding indicates that he likely has five spades and four hearts (maybe five) and about 16-18 HCP. Because North raised both suits, he probably has three spades and four hearts. Visualization complete, what's West's best lead? His best shot is the spade ace, followed by another spade. When West is lucky enough to win his trump king, he cashes his club ace and leads a third spade, and East's ruff produces the setting trick. Given the spade lead, South might suspect a threatening ruff and play ace and another trump, refusing the finesse. However, it won't help in today's layout. East has the third trump, and West's well-reasoned defense dooms the game.

NORTH
♠ Q 10 4
♥ Q 9 7 6
♦ K J 7 5 2
♣ 7

WEST
♠ A 6 2
♥ K 5
♦ 10 9 8 4
♣ A Q J 3

EAST
♠ 5 3
♥ 4 3 2
♦ Q 3
♣ 10 8 6 5 4

SOUTH
♠ K J 9 8 7
♥ A J 10 8
♦ A 6
♣ A 3

Vulnerable: Both
Dealer: South

The bidding:
1♠ South 2♠ North
3♥ South 4♥ North
Pass All pass

Opening lead: Diamond 10

N.Y. TIMES CROSSWORD

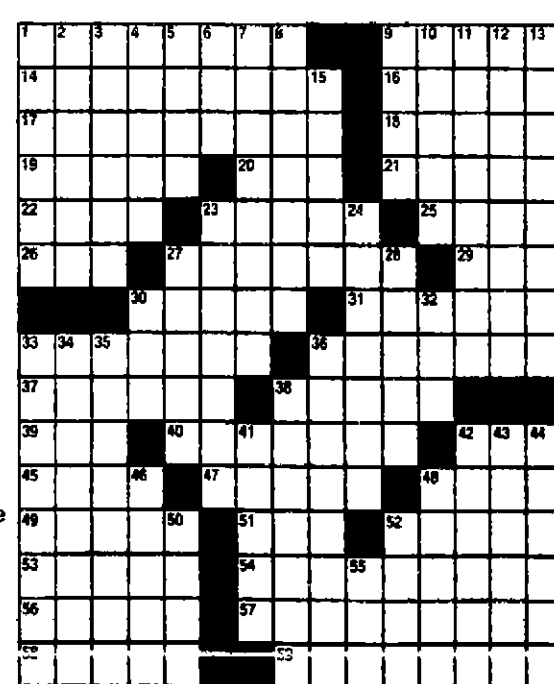
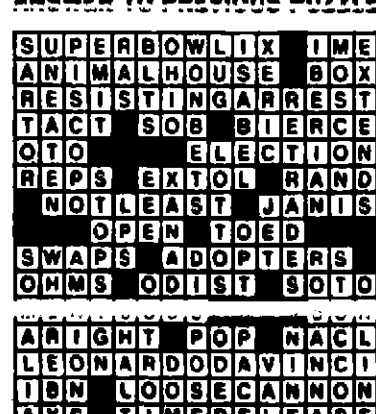
No. 0613

- ACROSS**
- 1 Begin with a Nobel
 - 9 Italian marble city
 - 14 Kind of surgery
 - 16 Taking turns?
 - 17 With reserve
 - 18 Demolish
 - 19 Aretha's partner in a 1989 pop hit
 - 20 Dine
 - 21 Stockpile
 - 22 Screwball
 - 23 Put through a sieve
 - 25 Pit passage
 - 26 Cabinet Dept.
 - 27 Over the top
 - 29 Drillers' org.
 - 30 L.A.'s Museum
 - 31 Kind of seal
 - 33 Hurried, musically
 - 36 Auto shop supplies
 - 37 Poe poem
 - 38 Red Sea republic
 - 39 Neighbor of Scorpius
 - 40 Spoke "We-e-ell"?
 - 42 White House monogram
 - 45 Plastic alternative
 - 47 Common sense?
 - 48 Hacking tool
 - 49 Caper
 - 51 Highland John
 - 52 Wearing less
 - 53 Dogie catcher
 - 54 Leader in national affairs
 - 56 After-class aide
 - 57 Whole note
 - 58 Correct
 - 59 Withdrew formally

DOWN

- 1 Classic car
- 2 Postscript
- 3 Trojan War figure
- 4 "Goldengirl" star, 1979
- 5 "Sky Dragon" detective
- 6 Party member
- 7 Erodes
- 8 1943 Cary Grant title role
- 9 Spydom name
- 10 Kitchen enticer
- 11 Make wedding plans
- 12 Shore dweller
- 13 Athletic elite
- 14 1846 novel set on an island of cannibals
- 23 No-good blokes
- 24 December spinner

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



- 27 Garfield feature
- 28 Leaves for lunch?
- 29 Onetime Camaro rival
- 32 Bus term
- 33 One way to order
- 34 Cranesbill
- 35 Perturbed
- 36 Application request
- 38 Place for a letter
- 41 Not right
- 42 Spam maker
- 43 Stick or split
- 44 Bull-like
- 46 Try to pick up
- 48 Iraqi port
- 50 Jack, for one
- 52 Daniels of early films
- 56 End

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